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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
WICHITA FILM SOCIETY
AND THE
MID-KANSAS CINEMA COUNCIL

cinegraph

Welcome to the ninth issue of CINEGRAPH, the newsletter of the Wichita Film Society (WFS) and the Mid-Kansas Cinema Council (M-KCC). Since 1951 the Society has been promoting and presenting alternative cinema in this city. WFS is an educational and cultural organization with membership open and the to anyone in the greater Wichita metropolitan area, through the Mid-Kansas Cinema Council (M-KCC).

The only way to be assured of obtaining a copy of CINEGRAPH is to join the Mid-Kansas Cinema Council. Memberships are \$20 annually. Members receive an annual JOURNAL, six issues of CINEGRAPH, any special publications, reduced admission to M-KCC events, and voting privileges on the Council.

We also request any information regarding film series, local productions, article ideas, WFS history, etc; please notify the editor (Ben Urish, 301 W. 11th, Wichita, Kansas 67203). Also remember, if you or your organization require information regarding film, whether history, programming, availability or whatever, M-KCC will be glad to be of assistance.

M-KCC TO PRESENT LLOYD FILM

The Mid-Kansas Cinema Council, in association with the Scottish Rite Temple, will present a film and lecture in the Temple's 1907 theater-auditorium on Saturday, September 24th at 7:30 p.m. The Temple is located at 332 E. 1st Street (1st and Topeka). Admission is \$2.00 for Temple and M-KCC members, and \$3.00 for the general public. Harold Lloyd's sound comedy MOVIE CRAZY will be screened following a lecture about his sound-era career. Mr. Lloyd was an active Shriner, serving as Imperial Potentate in 1949.

COMING SOON . . . PROBABLY NOT

Once again Wichita moviegoers will probably be denied the opportunity to see a non-commercial film that is generating a lot of interest. This time, however, the miserable will have company. Film bookers all over the nation are having difficulty in securing theaters for THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST, due to the bad publicity given it by protesters who wish the film to remain unseen. It is just this publicity that has boosted a small-budget films of limited appeal into a sure moneymaker for those exhibitors willing to weather the gale. At present none of Wichita's three theater chains are planning to show the film, and independent exhibitors will have to wait until the film has played out its theatrical run, whether or not that run includes Wichita.

CALENDAR LISTINGS

CINEGRAPH regrets that its bi-monthly schedule doesn't permit it to cover the alternative film scene as closely as we wish. It seems that as soon as we come out with a new issue, we get information on events scheduled before the next issue is due. If you would like an event listed in the "Calendar" section, please get it to us as soon as you can.

THE STORY OF
FAMILY THEATER

During the spring semester of 1972 the CAC Program Board (soon to be re-named the Student Activities Council) decided to sponsor a FAMILY FLICK at the start of the next semester. On Sunday, September 17th at 3:00 p.m. they showed the film RING OF BRIGHT WATER to a capacity crowd, which had paid \$.25 each to get in. A new committee was formed, and a limited series of family-oriented films was begun the following spring. The series grew, and in Fall of 1974 the group was absorbed into the Flick Committee, its name became FAMILY THEATER, and programming was expanded. For the next five years the series was enormously successful, often doing better business than its parent body (Flick). But, as the 1970's ended, Family Theater began to decline, and in Spring of 1983 the financial and organizational drain became so acute that the Flick Committee abandoned its efforts to keep Family Theater alive. At this point, The Wichita Film Society took control of the group, and with heavy promotion and a slight cut-back in programs, an attempt was made to revive the series. Results were moderately successful, with prizes, double-bills and other special events drawing appreciative crowds. Unfortunately, it was not enough to salvage the series, and after four seasons, WFS also surrendered to the inevitable. The last Family Theater presentation was ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN. When the WAA Film Series first began, old Family Theater stalwarts tried again, but this effort ended after one season. The Cinema and Video Committee at WSU recently attempted similar programming, with discouraging results.

NEWSREEL . . .

The next Wichita Art Association (WAA) brochures are available. If you aren't on their mailing list and want to be, give them a call at 686-6687. WFS shares their list with WAA, so if you're on the WFS list, you should get a WAA brochure. And, despite reports to the contrary, admission is still only \$3.00 . . .

Almost 50 people took the city walking tour of old theater sites on Saturday, June 18th. Nearly 30 sites were visited, and walkers were allowed into the Orpheum, Marple, and Scottish Rite Temple. Connie's Mexico Cafe at 504 E. Douglas is the site of an old theater named the Yale, which was in operation from 1908 until at least 1918. Other than those four locations, nearly everything else is now parking lots. City historian Bill Ellington plans other walking tours, so keep an eye out for them . . .

The Orpheum, by the way, still requires a lot of work before it can be used, in any capacity. Donations for theater seats, or anything, are sorely needed. If you're interested in helping, call 265-3241 . . .

Wichita lost another cinemaphile: Eagle-Beacon writer and critic Tony Brown. Mr. Brown has been a big supporter of alternative films, and that support will be missed . . .

The class on Classic American Screen Comedians, taught by Ben Urish, will be held on Thursday evenings at the Marcus Center for Continuing Education. The starting date for the class is September 8th. Call the Center at 689-3731 for enrollment information. Films of over 20 top comics will be screened. The class runs from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and enrollment costs \$77.00 . . .

The Dandelion at 1601 E. Douglas features films with a Christian message/outlook on Saturday nights at 7:30 p.m. Call them at 262-8293 for specific information . . .

NEWSREEL . . .
(CONTINUED)

Recent patrons at a matinee screening of animated classic BAMBI were in for a shocking disappointment. Instead of Thumper and Flower they were treated to the opening "steam-room/fight in the snow" scene from RED HEAT. Apparently the projectionist threaded up the wrong film and had left the theater upon starting the trailers. Though Disney Studios prided themselves on believable character animation, audience members were quick to note the discrepancy. A spokesman for the theater said "As long as you work with people, these things are bound to happen." And with cartoons, too . . .

The Cinema and Video Committee on the WSU campus has released their new schedule for the semester. Their events are listed in our calendar, but news of other Student Activities Council events can be obtained by calling 689-3495 and requesting their complete calendar . . .

Various readers have requested interesting trivia about Wichita's theaters, so here's a trivial item about the Pawnee Theaters . . . The southern-most screen in the complex, the one which is on the other side of the bathrooms from the other theaters, bears a distinction which makes it unique in Wichita. It is the city's only "silver" screen. About seven years ago there was a small boom in 3-D films, spearheaded by COMIN' AT YA, a 3-D spaghetti western. The improved 3-D process was enhanced when projected on a special screen, which could be used with no ill effects on standard films. So the Pawnee got one, and still has it. The next time you're there, wade through the sickening muck that passes for a floor, ignore the teeth-cracking buzz that emanates from the speakers, and taking shallow breaths so as to not inhale fully the putrid air that hasn't circulated since the theater opened, go up front and take a good look at this rarity. And some folks say there's nothing entertaining to do in Wichita! . . .

One of the proud claims of the NORTHROCK CINEPLEX upon its grand opening was that two of its theaters were equipped to show 70mm films. It was hoped that this would ensure that Wichita would get more 70mm films on their first run. So far that has not been the case, and prospects for improvement don't look very promising. DIE HARD, an adventure film starring (if that's the word) Bruce Willis, had a large national release in the 70mm format. For two weeks it played only in 70mm and was advertised as such nationally. But we didn't get it until the two weeks were up, and we didn't get it in 70mm. Despite having four theaters which are able to show 70mm format films, fans of the improved sound and picture quality must content themselves with infrequent midnight screenings of re-issued films . . .

The Commonwealth Amusement Corporation, which came into existence in 1925, has breathed its last as a corporate entity. The company has been dissolved and its chain of theaters, one of the Midwest's largest, has been broken up and sold. Our sources tell us that the main purchaser is the theater branch of United Artists, but that most of the theaters in this area have been bought by the Midland Corporation. At present, it is not known who will take over the Wichita Commonwealth Theaters, which include Cinemas East, Cinemas West, Pawnee Theaters, and the Crest Theater. They may be sold as a package, or on an individual basis. Get ready for the usual round of rumors about the Crest. One already started is that the basement will be converted into a small theater, and the existing theater turned into two auditoriums, making the Crest a tri-plex. The story is totally unsubstantiated.

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CALENDAR

- 9/7 (W) A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN. Chilean comedy about the myths and mysteries of machismo mysticism. Kansas Room, CAC, WSU Campus, 12:30 and 7:00 p.m., Free.
- 9/9 (F) MARLENE. Maximillion Schell's documentary about Marlene Dietrich, preceded by Buster Keaton's DAYDREAMS. Wichita Art Association (WAA), 8:00 p.m., \$3.00 admission.
- 9/16 (F) DREAMCHILD. The story of the woman who inspired ALICE IN WONDERLAND. Plus Hans Richter's GHOSTS BEFORE BREAKFAST. WAA, 8:00 p.m., \$3.00
- 9/23 (F) OUTDOOR FILMFEST. Double feature of cult-classic WITCHFINDER GENERAL and psychotronic A SEVERED HEAD. East Patio, CAC, WSU Campus, 9:00 p.m., Free.
- 9/23 (F) A TRIBUTE TO MACK SENNETT. Find out why he was known as the "King of Comedy". Films featuring Chaplin, Fatty Arbuckle, Mabel Normand, Harry Langdon, the Keystone Kops, and others. With live musical accompaniment. WAA, 8:00 p.m., \$3.00.
- 9/24 (Sa) MOVIE CRAZY. Harold Lloyd talkie comedy has him as small-town boy who goes to Hollywood. See lead article for details. Scottish Rite Temple, 7:30 p.m., \$2.00/members, \$3.00/general public.
- 9/30 (F) CARAVAGGIO. The life of the great Renaissance artist is told from his own perspective, with a little camp/hip modernism added. Adults only. WAA, 8:00 p.m., \$3.00
- 10/7 (F) HAROLD AND MAUDE. Suicidal adolescent learns the value of life from elderly concentration camp survivor. Union Station Pub, CAC, WSU Campus, 7:00 p.m., Free.
- 10/7 (F) FRENCH TRIPLE PLAY. Three French classics from the mid-1930's: Jacques Tati's HAPPY SUNDAY, Jean Renoir's DAY IN THE COUNTRY, and Jean Vigo's ZERO FOR CONDUCT. WAA, 8:00 p.m., \$3.00.
- 10/14 (F) BALLAD OF NARAYAMA. Japanese film about elderly woman who sacrifices herself for her family and village. Winner of the 1983 Cannes Palme d'Or. WAA, 8:00 p.m., \$3.00.
- 10/21 (F) ELECTION YEAR SPECIAL. Bloopers from Ronald Reagan's screen career (we're all too familiar with his more recent bloopers). Plus BETTY BOOP FOR PRESIDENT, and the feature: Gore Vidal's THE BEST MAN starring Henry Fonda. WAA, 8:00 p.m., \$3.00.
- 10/28 (F) HALLOWEEN SPECIAL. Three "phantastique" films, Our Gang/Little Rascals, an incredibly animated film THE MASCOT, and Boris Karloff jumps when THE DEVIL COMMANDS. All treats, no tricks. WAA, 8:00 p.m., \$3.00.